

# Natural Supports and the Open Table



**“Building community resources in your locality through natural supports and the Open Table movement”**



# Learning Objectives

- The difference between a natural support and formal support
- The barriers to building natural supports and tools to overcome barriers
- How to use supports already in the community that are free and effective
- Review of the Open Table model



# A Walk through a VA Family's Journey Navigating the MH System



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# WHAT LED TO THE SUCCESS OF THIS FAMILY??????



A photograph of two women embracing warmly. The woman on the left is wearing a dark blue sweater over a white and blue patterned top, and the woman on the right is wearing a black top. They are both smiling. The background shows a brick wall and a whiteboard.

## How Natural Supports Influenced McKenzie's Story



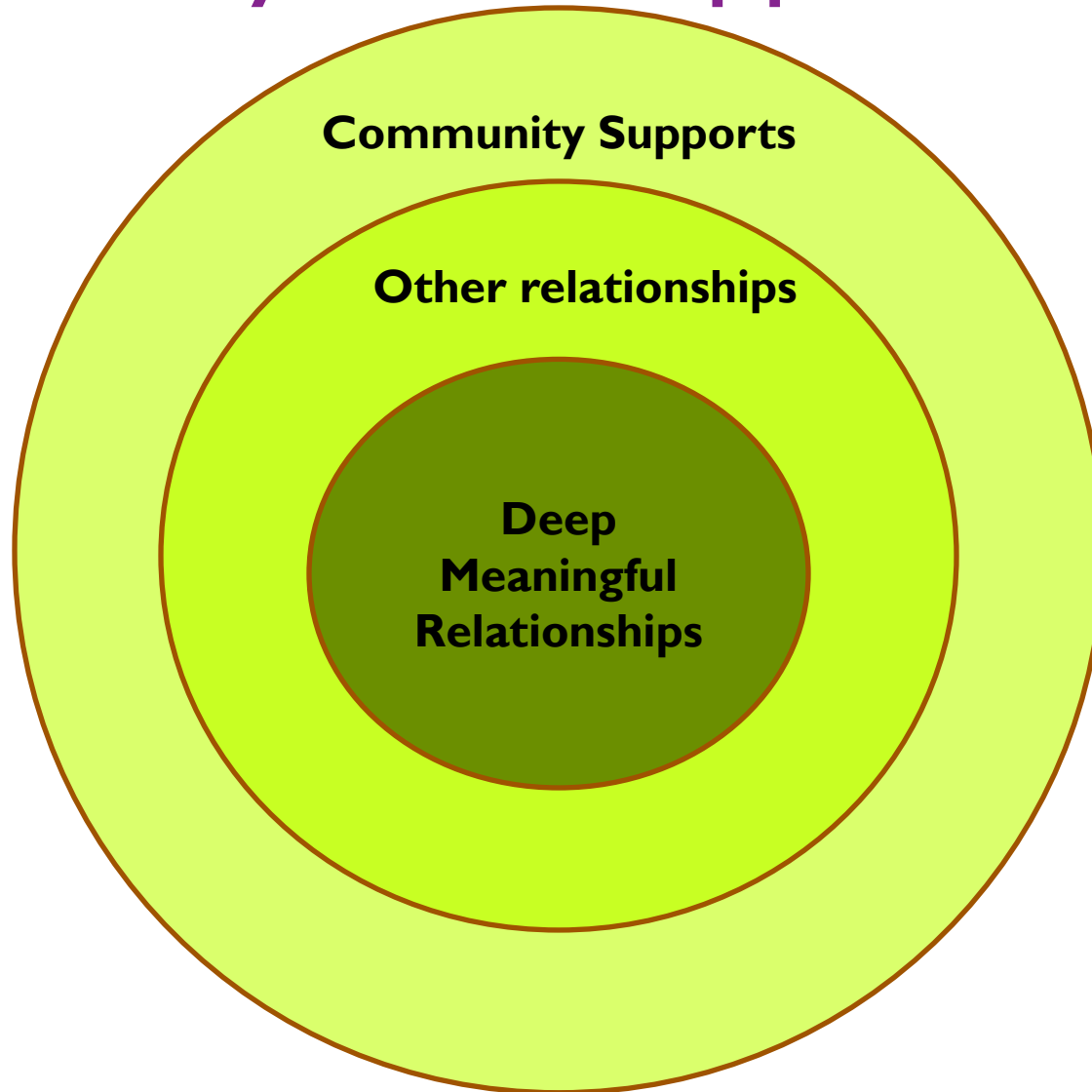
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# Supports as a building block to resiliency

Think about a time in your life where you had a crisis situation. How did you get through it?????



# Layers of Support





# Natural Support Vs. Formal Support

“ A Natural Support is anyone who is in a persons life who is not paid to be there”





# Barriers to Natural Supports

- Burned Bridges
- Live in a different state
- Time
- Lack of understanding/knowledge
- Not knowing how to use supports
- Lack of trust

# How do you overcome those barriers????



# Deep Meaningful Relationships

- Ask questions
  - Who do you call when you want to share really exciting news?
  - Who do you call to help you process bad news?
- Invite them to bring these folks to FAPT meetings, IEP meetings, other meetings
- Include them in treatment planning





# Other Relationships

- Help repair relationships within their family systems (building bridges)
- Help families build reciprocal relationship
- Family Support Partners



By Frits Ahlefeldt



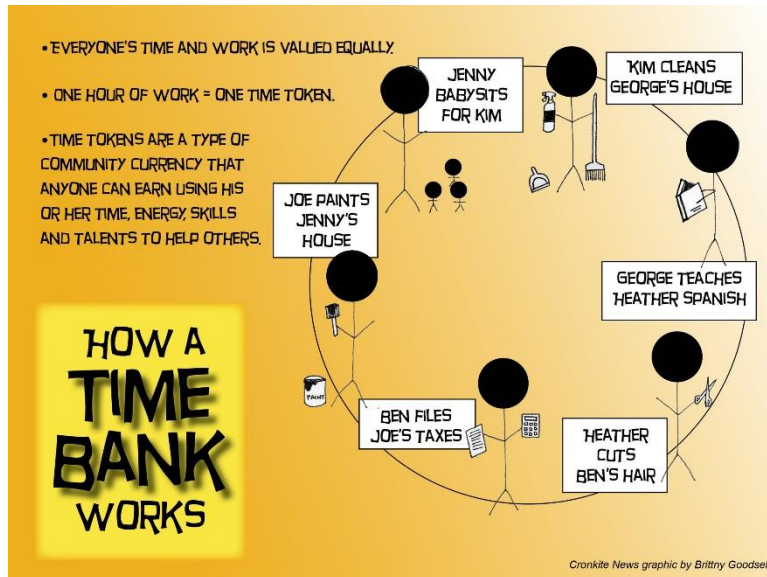
# Help the family think outside the box

- Are there places that supports are occurring and we are not tapping into them????
- Think inside the “box”
- What community supports can you offer that they may not know of????

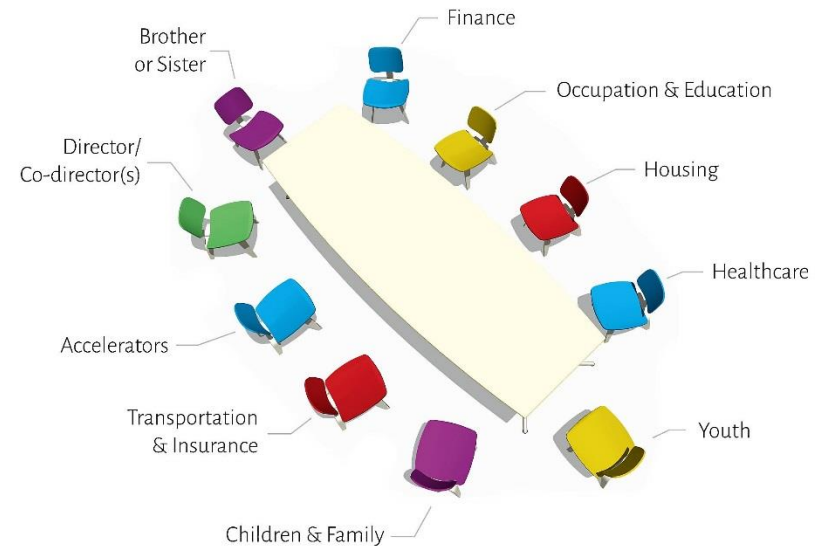


# Community Supports

## Time banks



## The Open Table

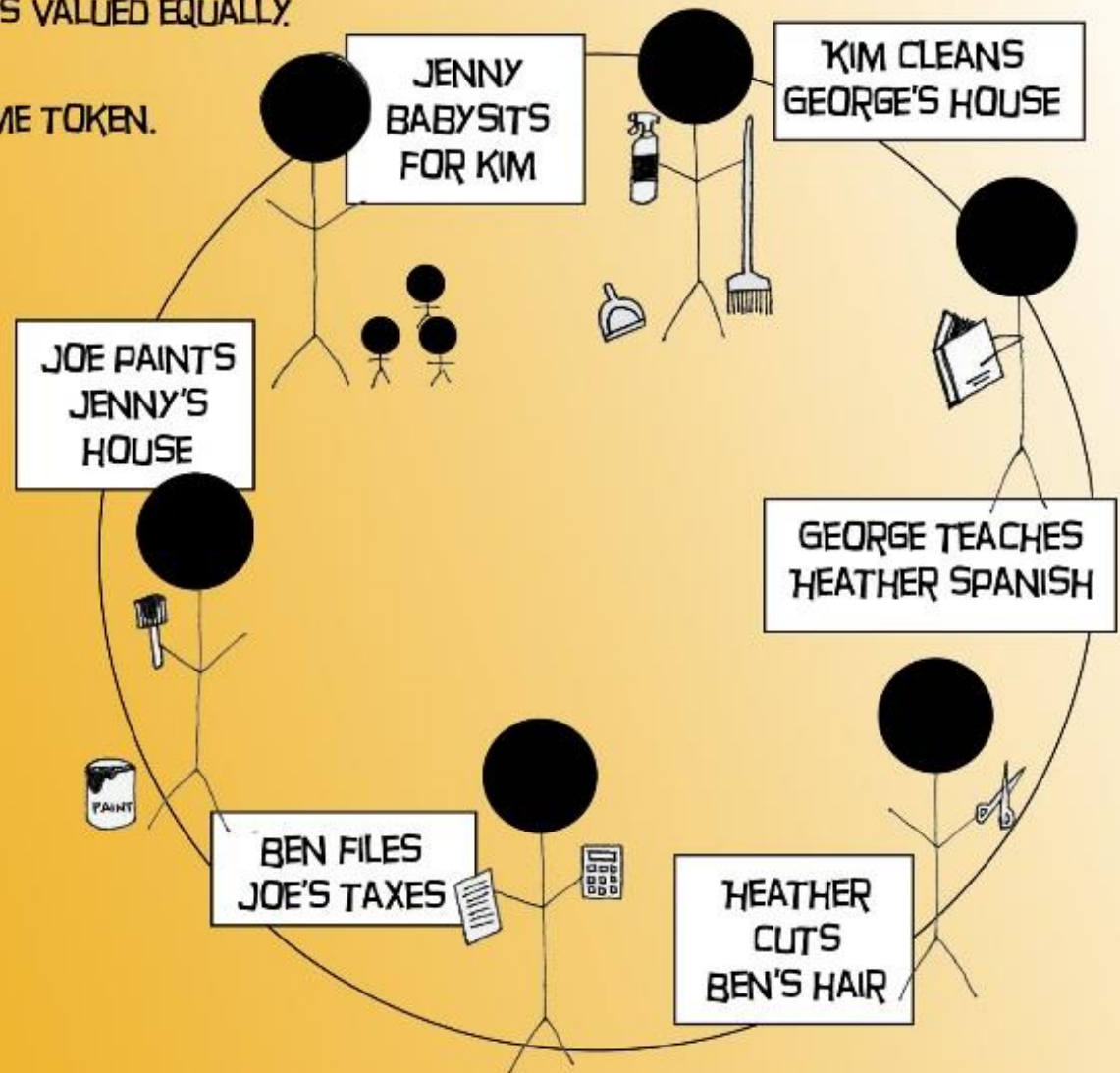


- EVERYONE'S TIME AND WORK IS VALUED EQUALLY.

- ONE HOUR OF WORK = ONE TIME TOKEN.

- TIME TOKENS ARE A TYPE OF COMMUNITY CURRENCY THAT ANYONE CAN EARN USING HIS OR HER TIME, ENERGY, SKILLS AND TALENTS TO HELP OTHERS.

# HOW A TIME BANK WORKS



Cronkite News graphic by Brittney Goodsell



# Examples

- <https://cvilletimebank.com/blog/>
- <http://timebanks.org/what-is-timebanking>





[www.theopentable.org](http://www.theopentable.org)

**From Transaction to  
Transformation.  
From Poverty Community.  
One Person at a Time.**

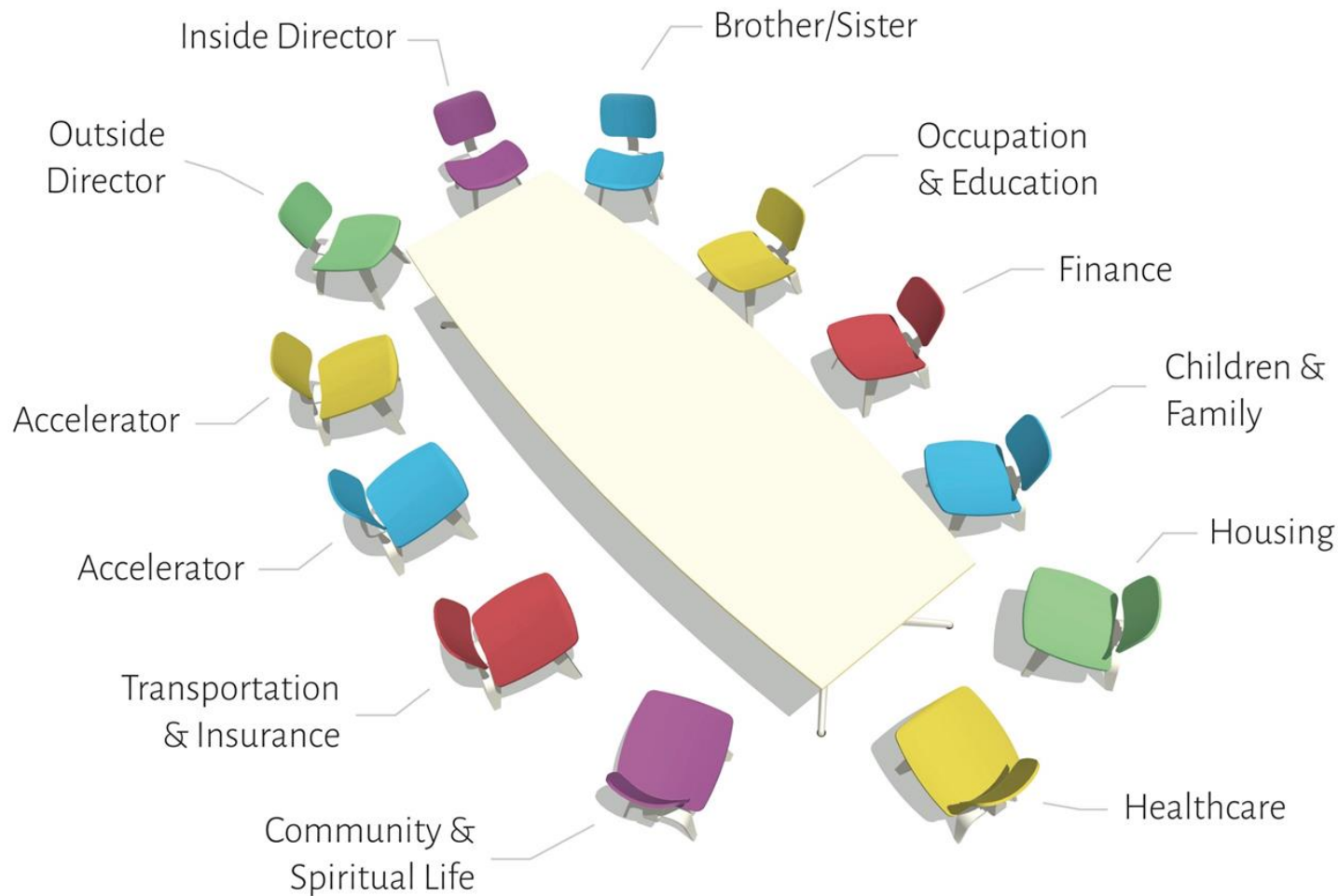


# A Poverty Transformation Movement

A way to partner with the faith based community to allow the youth and families we serve to have natural supports with in the community. The goal is that Open Table can work to transform families lives so that the SOC work is sustainable within the community.



# The Open Table Model



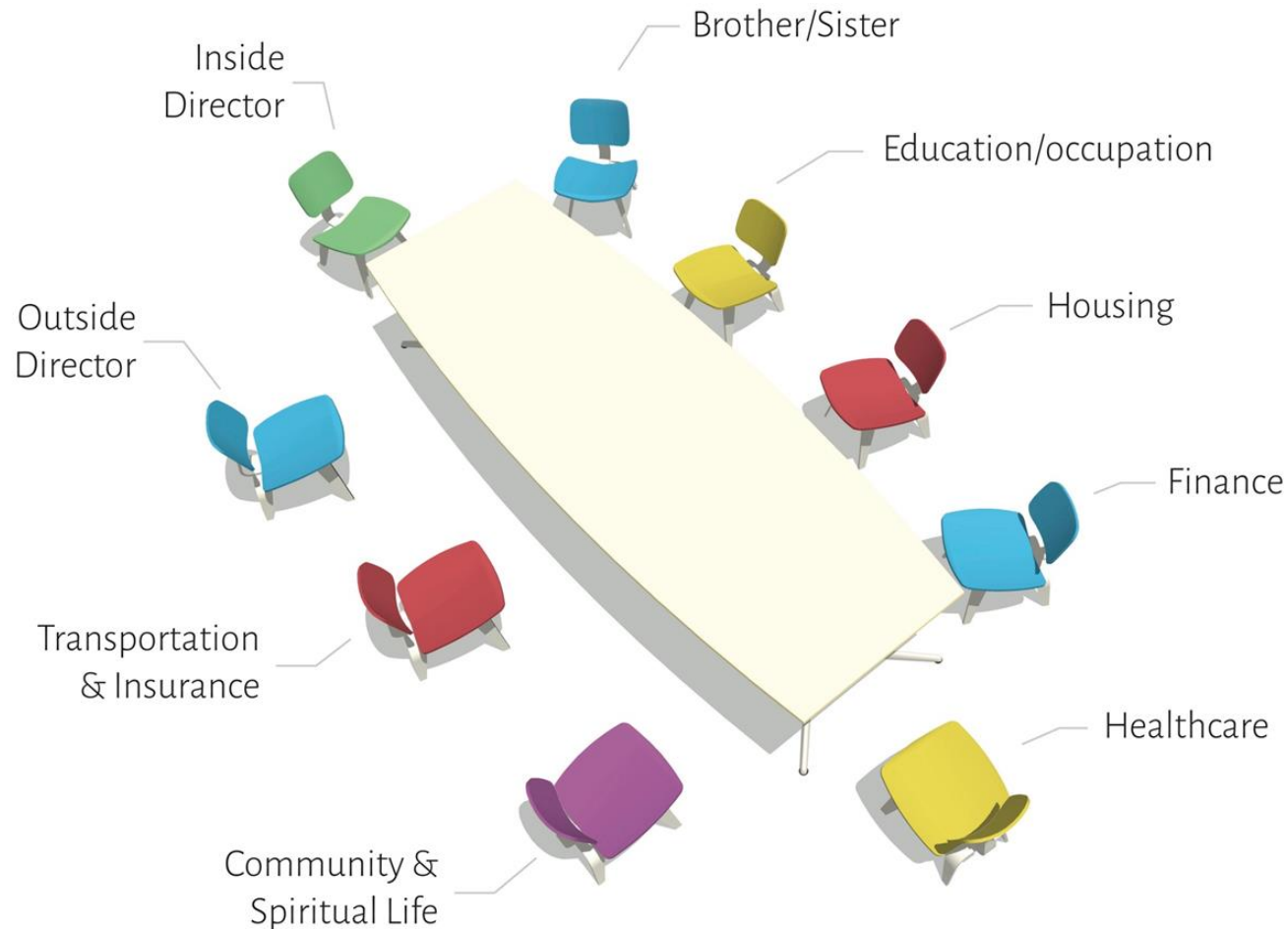
*\* In addition to these chair roles, one Table member will also serve as an advocate for the Brother/Sister*

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# Young Adult Version



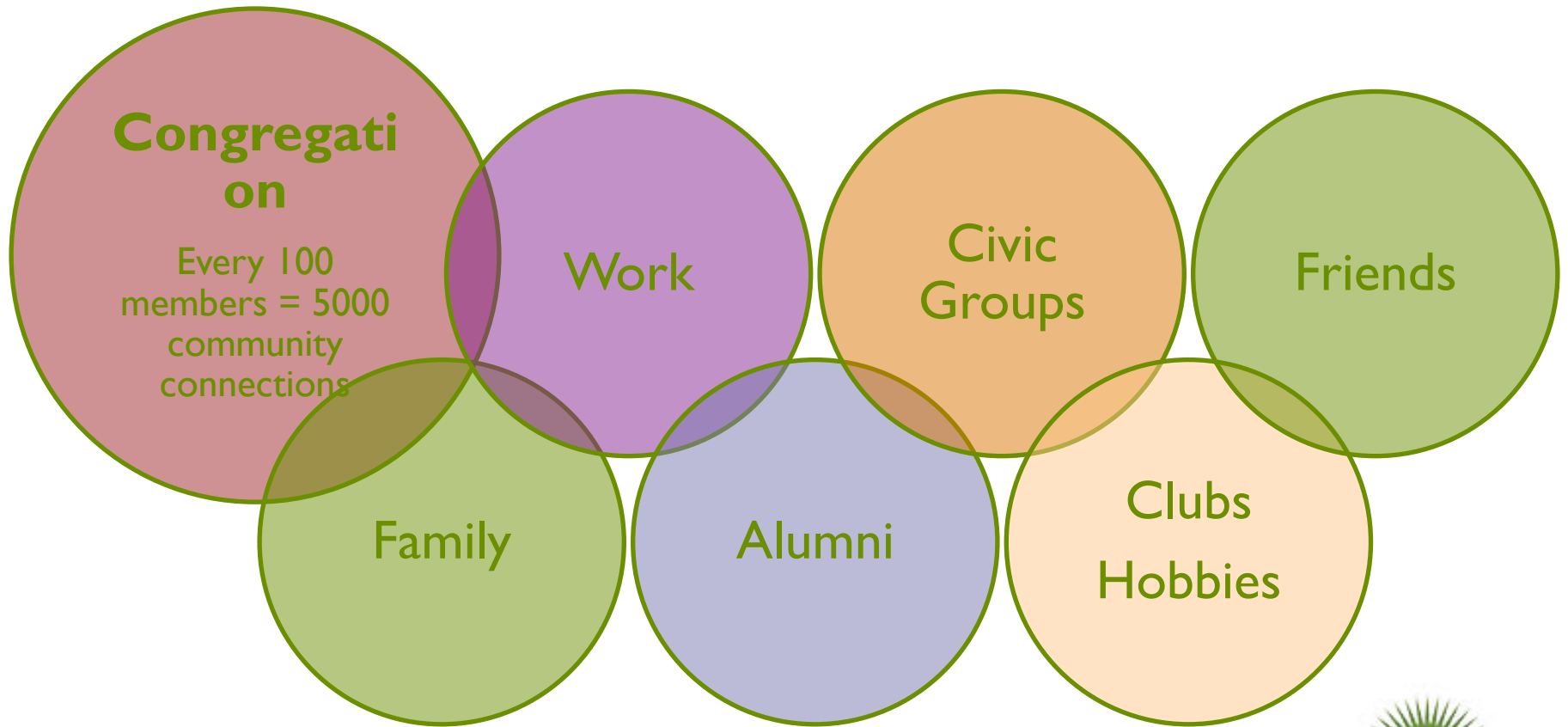
*\* In addition to these chair roles, one Table member will also serve as an advocate for the Brother/Sister*

*\*\* The Table size for Young Adult with no parenting responsibilities is 6 to 8 Table members, for Young Adults with parenting responsibility the Table size must be 10 to 12 Table members*

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# The Secret Sauce: Networking



# On Going Sustainability.....

95% of participants have long term relationships with one or more of their former Table members.

95% of participants report that they are self-supporting at this time or are confident that they will be self-supporting in the future

100% of participants have more optimism about their future and feel like they are headed in the right direction





# Young Adult Example

- <http://www.theopentable.org/>



# Implementation

What are a few things you can start to do tomorrow to help build natural supports for the kids and families you work with?



# Questions????



# THANK YOU

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